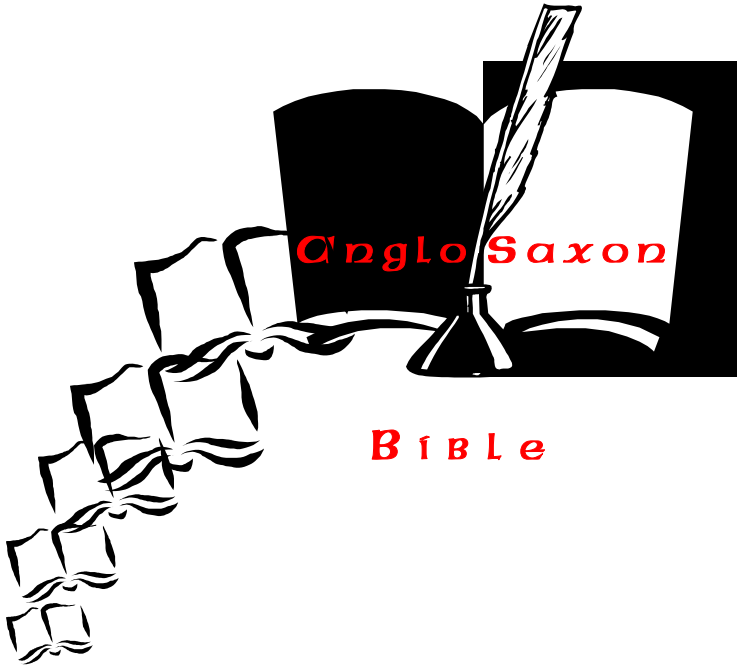


CHAPTER 19



“**N**o doubt only a small part of the translations actually made have come down to us...”

(The Cambridge History of the Bible, ed. G.W.H. Lampe, vol. 2, Cambridge University Press, 1969, p. 427).



e NGLAND was dominated by the Celtic Britons for at least 500 years before Christ. In 55 B.C. the Romans marched, carrying their laws, their language and building byways which in less than 100 years would carry the gospel of Jesus Christ to the natives of Britain. According to historians, Christ’s command to “Go ye into all the world,” coupled with the new gift of tongues, carried countless Christians to “preach the gospel” in the first century to the ‘isle’ which is today called England (Mark 16:15). The trail of blood which brought us our English Bible begins with those nameless Christians who received that tongue spoken by the “Barbarians” — Celtic Britons — living in the “isles of the sea” (Acts 2, Isa. 24:15). We will follow the footsteps of the Bible from the disciples (1st century) to Coverdale (16th century) on the upcoming pages through *direct quotations* from the sages who actually lived during these ages: Tertullian (200s), Gildas (500s), Bede (700s), Asser (800s), William of Malmesbury (1100s), *The Anglo-Saxon Chronicles* (700-1200s), and John Foxe (1500s). The climb over the rugged spelling and unfamiliar sentence terrain brings the seeker to a vista of truth unclouded by the opinions of today’s liberal historians.

Also lighting the path are *direct quotes* from last century’s premier scholars in the fields of English history and

linguistics, men such as Toynbee, Bosworth, Skeat, and the editors of the rare 1911 scholars edition of the British *Encyclopaedia Britannica*.



Warning Bell: Most *other* histories of English Christianity, including those used in seminaries and even home schools, are at recess from the first century until Rome rings the bell in England in A.D. 597. Augustine calls them to class to hear fables of a 1001 might, maybes, monks and monasteries, wrongly steering them along the polluted Latin Vulgate river, to the *supposed* ‘first’ English Bible in A.D. 1382. “[T]here is nothing covered,” by the slight hand of man “that shall not be revealed” or time can leave sealed (Matt. 10:26). Contrary to the much repeated myth that ‘Augustine brought Christianity to Britain in A.D. 597,’ the following primary source documentation proves that there were many Britons, “men of Celtic race who were already Christians” carrying the scriptures throughout England during the first six centuries and in the years following (Peter Hunter Blair, *Anglo-Saxon England*, New York: Barnes and Noble Books, 1996 edition, p. 119, originally published by Cambridge University Press).



Britain:

FROM CHRIST TO A.D. 300

John foxe, in A.D. 1583, authored *Acts and Monuments*, the eight-volume history of Christians in England (and elsewhere), their Bible and their martyrdom. Foxe warns readers that the church of Rome has painted the memories of *true* Christians (whether rulers, writers, or martyrs) with the veneer of their harlot religion. Foxe says,

“As also I wish, moreover that the stories both of him [Alban], and of all other Christian martyrs, might have been delivered to us simple as they were, without the admixture of all these abbey-like additions of monkish-miracles, wherewith they were wont to paint out the glory of such saints to the most, by whose offerings [\$] they were accustomed to receive most advantage” (John Foxe, *Act and Monuments*, 1583, republished at London: R.B. Seeley and W. Burnside, ed., Stephen Cattley, 1841, vol. 1, p. 259).

Foxe gives **seven proofs** that the gospel spread over England, from the time of the apostles through the sixth century — long before Rome’s emissaries arrived. He writes: “The **first** I take of the testimony of Gildas [writing in A.D. 633], our countryman; who in his history affirmeth plainly, that **Britain received the gospel in the time of Tiberius the emperor, under whom Christ suffered**; and saith moreover, that Joseph of Arimathea, after the dispersion of the early church by the Jews, was sent of **Philip the apostle** from France **to Britain, about the year of our Lord 63**, and here remained in this land all his time; and so, with his fellows, laid the first foundation of Christian faith among the British people, whereupon other preachers and teachers coming afterward, confirmed the same and increased it” (Foxe, vol. 1, p. 306).

Walter Scott confirms that, “Christ and him crucified was preached in Great Britain as early as the **first century**, especially during the reigns of Nero and Domitian, **A.D. 54-68, 81-96**, and probably by the immediate companions of the Apostle Paul, while numerous **translations of portions of the Scriptures** from the...[Old] Latin Bible...were made and circulated during the second century. It is an interesting

circumstance that Brân, a British king, was at Rome as a hostage for the good behavior of his country, during the imprisonment of **Paul** in the imperial city. He was probably converted by the Apostle, as on his return to Britain he was accompanied by certain Christian teachers, among whom was **Aristobulus (Rom. xvi. 10)**. Brân preached Christ in Wales” (Walter Scott, *The Story of Our English Bible*, London: Pickering & Inglis, no date (c. 1890?), p. 126).

William of Malmesbury, writing in the 1100s, reconfirms that Christianity was brought to Britain by *at least* the year **A.D. 63**, by Joseph of Arimathea with 12 companions. (See *Gesta Regum Anglorum, On the Antiquity of the Church of Glastonbury* and *De antiquitate Glastoniensis ecclesiae*, as cited in Jacques Paul Migne, *Patrologia Latinus*, clxxix, cols. 168 ff., as cited in Bruce Metzger, *The Early Versions of the New Testament*, Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1977, p. 443.)

John Marsden, Bede’s biographer, reminds us that the “Romans...brought the new faith from the heart of the empire to the Wall on its northern frontier [Hadrian’s wall, built in Britain in **A.D. 121**]” (John Marsden, *The Illustrated Bede*, Edinburgh: Floris Books, 1989, p. 13).

foxe continues: “The **second** reason is out of Tertullian [c. 150 - c. 230]; who, living near about, or rather somewhat before, the time of Eleutherius [c. 180], in his book “*Contra Judaeos*,” manifestly importeth the same; where the said Tertullian, testifying how the gospel was dispersed abroad by the sound of the **apostles**, and there reckoning up the Medes, Persians, Parthians, and dwellers in Mesopotamia, Jewry, Cappadocia, Pontus, Asia, Phrygia, Egypt, Pamphylia, with many more, at length cometh to the coast of the Moors, and all the borders of Spain, with divers nations of France; and there amongst all other reciteth also **the parts of Britain which the Romans could never attain to, and reporteth the same now to be subject to Christ**; as also reckoneth up the places of Sarmatia, of

the Dacians, the Germans, the Scythians, with many other provinces and isles to him unknown; in all which places (saith he) reigneth the name of Christ, which now beginneth to be common. This hath Tertullian. Note here how among other diverse believing nations, he mentioneth also **the wildest places of Britain** to be of the same number; and these, in his time, were christened; who was in the same Eleutherius' time, as is above said. Then pope Eleutherius was **not** the first which sent the Christian faith into this realm, but the gospel was here received before his time, either by Joseph of Arimathea (as some chronicles record), or by some of **the apostles** or of their scholars, which had been here preaching Christ before Eleutherius wrote to Lucius." Foxe adds, "Their service was then in the **vulgar tongue**...[They] baptised then in rivers, not in hallowed fonts" (Foxe, vol. 1, pp. 306, 308 et al.).

Tertullian writes that there were *few* places that were inaccessible to the Romans where the truth of Christ had not been ministered. (See Tertullian, *Adv. Judaeos*, vii, "*Britannorum inaccessa Romanis loca Christo vero subdita*," as cited in Metzger, p. 444; see also Blair, p. 127.)

Foxe adds, "My **third** probation I deduct from Origen [c. 185 - c. 254]; whose words be these, "*Britanniam in Christianam consetire religionem*...whereby it appeareth, that the faith of Christ was sparsed here in England **before** the days of Eleutherius [A.D. 180]" (Foxe, vol. 1, p. 306).

Origen remarks on the unifying force Christianity had on Britain in **the first two centuries**. (Origen, *Homil. iv. 1* in *Ezek.* as cited in Migne, PL, xxv, col. 723, "*quando enim terra Britanniae ante adventum Christi in unius dei consensit religionem*"; also cited in Metzger, p. 444.)

Toynbee concludes that these two first hand reports [Tertullian and Origen] "testify to a well-established Christian community, capable of at least some

missionary effort, and to a fairly widespread diffusion of the faith, in the province **by about the year 200**” (J.M.C. Toynbee, ‘Christianity in Roman Britain,’ *Journal of the British Archaeological Association*, 3rd ser., xvi (1953), p. 2, as cited in Metzger, p. 444).

Foxe concludes, “For my **fourth** probation I take the testimony of Bede...Whereby it is to be collected, that the first preachers in this land [Britain] had come out from the east part of the world...rather than from Rome. **Fifthly**, I may allege the words of Nicephorus; where he saith that **Simon Zelotes [apostle called in Luke 6:15, Acts 1:13] did spread the gospel of Christ to the west ocean, and brought the same unto the isles of Britain.** **Sixthly**, may be here added also the words of Peter of Clugni; who, writing to Bernard, affirmeth that the Scots in his time did...not after the Roman manner...nor would admit any primacy of the bishop of Rome to be above them. For the **seventh** argument...[King] Lucius had received the faith of Christ in this land...About the time and year of the Lord **180**...Fagan and Damian...converted the king and people of Britain...The temples of idolatry and all other monuments of gentility they subverted, converting the people from their diverse and many gods, to serve one living God. Thus true religion with sincere faith increasing, superstition decayed, with all other rites of idolatry...the gospel received generally almost in all the land...[S]ome writers...[stated that King Lucius] became a preacher...preaching and teaching in France, in Germany...[and] founded many churches...[W]hen the Britons ruled, they were governed by Christians” after King Lucius [A.D. 180 - 449] (Foxe, vol. 1, pp. 307-312).

Bede, in the 600s, authored the *Ecclesiastical History of the English Nation*, which confirms the conversion of “a certain Lucius, king of Britons, in the second century” (Blair, p. 126).

William of malmesbury records the work of Christian missionaries Phagan and Deruvian (Fagan and Damian) who arrived in Britain in A.D. 166 at the request of Lucius, king of the Britons. These missionaries found **the church “that had been built the previous century by the hands of the disciples of Christ”** (Metzger, p. 443, n.3).

J.R. Dore writes, “The date Holy Scripture, or portions of it, was first translated into the English language cannot be accurately fixed...There is no doubt but that when the Christian religion was planted in “the isles of the sea,” one of the first undertakings of the early missionaries would be, as soon as it could safely be done, to translate into the **vernacular tongue** of the people...the **Epistles**, and **Gospels**...That no copy is now extant of **the Bible translated into the vernacular tongue of that period**, does not prove no such translation ever existed. All the **evidence** we have testifies that constant use was made of the Scriptures by the British church...[P]ortions of Holy Writ were often committed to memory by the faithful...Christians, anxious to preserve their mysteries from profanation, preferred to trust to the oral transmission...rather than risk a profane use being made of them” (J.M.C. Toynebee, ‘Christianity in Roman Britain,’ *Journal of the British Archaeological Association*, 3rd ser., xvi (1953).



“ Scripture Burnt ”

“[T]he Christian community in Britain at this time [300s] was substantial” (Blair, p.127). Foxe, Bede, Constantius and Gildas agree that the persecution by Roman emperor Diocletian in A.D. 303 reached the Christians in Britain. Foxe testifies that under Diocletian “all our English chronicles do testify and record, all Christianity almost in the whole land was destroyed...” (Foxe, vol. 1, p. 312). We have no copies of any Celtic scriptures from before A.D. 300 because they were destroyed and “all books of Scripture burnt” (Foxe, vol 1, p. 259).

Bede, using “ancient documents,” rehearses the testimony of Alban, a Christian martyred during this persecution. Bede wrote, “And so the brave martyr was beheaded on that spot and received the crown of life that God has promised to those that love him” (Marsden, pp. 198, 44). Alban’s final words to his inquisitor were:

“I am now a Christian...These sacrifices, which you offer to evil spirits, can give no help to their worshippers nor fulfil the desires and prayers of their supplicants. The truth is rather that anyone who has offered sacrifices to these idols will receive as his reward the everlasting torments of Hell” (Marsden, p. 43).

“**Gildas** refers to the destruction of churches in Britain during the persecution and to their subsequent rebuilding” (Blair, p. 127).

Foxe summarizes: “[T]he Christian faith first received of king Lucius, endured in Britain till this time, near upon the season of four hundred years and odd, when...fighting with the Saxons against the Britons it was near extinct in all the land, during the space of about forty-four years...In sum from Christ to Lucius were one hundred and eighty years. The continuance of the gospel from Lucius to the entering of the Saxons, was two hundred and sixty-nine years (Foxe, vol. 1, p. 328).

The persecution by Diocletian in A.D. 303 and the sack by the Saxons in A.D. 449 destroyed any Bibles in Britain in the Celtic Briton or Old Latin language.



Against Christian Britons

Due to the departure from Britain of the Roman military machine in A.D. 410, the inhabitants of Britain were quickly overcome in A.D. 449 by the sea-navigating Germanic tribes called the Angles, Saxon, and Jutes.

Foxe said that “the idolatrous Saxons prevailed in number and strength against the Christian Britons; oppressing the people, throwing down churches...wasting Christianity throughout the whole realm...” (Foxe, vol. 1, p. 323).

Gildas, writing in A.D. 633 in *History Cariansae*, records how Britons, and even the nation’s Christians, had fallen into sin, bringing God’s judgment through the invaders.

“...if any might be perceived to be somewhat more humble and meek, or to be more inclined to favor the truth than the residue, him did everyone hate and backbite...And not secular men only did this, but also the congregation of the Lord...and their teachers...Therefore it is not to be marveled that such people, so degenerating and going out of kind, should lose that country which they had after this manner defiled” (Foxe, vol. 1, p. 324).

Once again, foreign invaders destroyed the Bibles held by the native Celtic Britons and Picts who fled to the western and northern fringes of the island. The Picts and Scots “had long been Christian” before Augustine (Blair, p. 124). It was through Irish “preaching that they adopted the Christian faith...long ago” [before A.D. 565] (Marsden, p. 55).

Íreland

Secular historians admit, “Christianity also arrived there [Ireland], indeed considerably earlier than the annals of the church suggest...[T]he Celtic church flourishing in the island was older than both Irish apostles [Patrick and Palladius] and different from what the pope desired...How it could have started we still cannot tell...Christianity seems to have advanced by the power of persuasion alone (Gerhard Herm, *The Celts*, New York: St. Martin’s Press, 1975, pp. 260, 261, 262).

Patrick records his conversion to saving faith in Jesus Christ in the 400s. It took place in County Antrim, Northern Ireland, where a strong remnant remains today. (Recently, Desmond Cannaway bravely stood up in an ecumenical church service in N. Ireland and echoed his ancestor’s cry to Catholic Cardinal Carlo Maria Martini, an editor of the corrupt United Bible Societies Greek text underlying the TNIV, NIV ESV, HCSB, and NASB, saying, “I refuse to accept your false gospel of unity, Cardinal Martini.”) His progenitor Patrick writes,

“The Lord opened to me the sense of my unbelief that I might remember my sins and that I might return with my whole heart to the Lord, my God...I was like a stone lying in the mire, but he who is able came. He raised me up in his mercy” (as cited by Duane Russell, “The Real St. Patrick,” *The Day Spring* (2001, No. 1), Banbridge, Co. Down. Northern Ireland: G. Edgerton, pp. 3-5).

Rome has tried to wrap Patrick’s memory, along with many other well known Christians, with the attire of their harlot religion, but “from his writings it can be gathered that he had no connection whatsoever with Rome...When we turn to his own writings — his *Confession*, (profession of faith) *Letter to Coroticus*, and his *Hymn* or ‘*Breastplate*,’ we find a wholly different man to that so often portrayed...Patrick’s writings also reveal the purity of the Christian faith which he espoused. While these abound with **scripture quotations**, there is no mention of prayers for the dead, no emphasis upon, or worship of Mary, no reference to the mass or the sovereignty of the pope.” Patrick led many, including Laoghaire, high king of Ireland, to Christ “through his simple, **scriptural** and evangelical preaching” (Russell, pp. 3-5).

Bede writes of poor Irish Christians: “[I]f a rich man gave them money they would at once give it to the poor, as they themselves had no cause to collect money or erect buildings...They and their like would go into their church to pray and listen to the **word of God**” (Herm, p. 263).

Briton’s Christians, “began to swarm all over Europe converting men” to saving faith in Jesus Christ “Irishmen covered all of France and the greater part of Germany in accomplishing what is one of the great missionary feats of the church’s history.” When writing of “holy” Christians, one historian states that, “there were more of these in Ireland than elsewhere in Europe during the fifth, sixth, and

seventh centuries.” The pure Bibles used by the English throughout the centuries were the result, in part, of the “stronger links” the Irish Christians had with the “Greek civilization” and its pure New Testament manuscripts “than with Rome” and its corrupt versions (Herm, pp. 265, 269-271).



“Convert The Invaders”

Celtic missionaries from Ireland and Scotland, as well as missionaries from the continent, made efforts to convert the inhabitants of Britain and their Germanic invaders, the Angles, Saxons, and Jutes; the missionaries met with much success (Blair, p. 305).

Bede asserts, “In the year of our Lord 565...there came to **Britain** from Ireland...Columba...to preach **the word of God** to the kingdoms of the northern Picts...The southern Picts...are said to have given up the errors of idolatry long before this [565] and received true faith through the preaching of **the word**...Now Columba came to Britain...and converted the people to the Christian faith by his word and his example...[T]hey diligently practiced those works of devotion and purity which they could learn from **the writings of the prophets, evangelists and apostles**” (Marsden, pp. 55, 57).

Cambridge Professor Peter Blair writes of “The readiness with which paganism was abandoned...” He states that there were few if any places in England “which had not been visited by a missionary.”

“**Bede** has left a vivid account of the destruction of a Northumbrian heathen temple...”

Coifi, the heathen high-priest, displayed his zeal for the new faith by remarking that none was more fitted than himself to initiate the overthrow of the old ways...[He] was the first to profane the old idols and altars which he himself had consecrated” (Blair, pp. 117, 118, 119, 120, 121).

The Celtic language gave way to the language of the Angli and Saxon conquerors. Anglo-Saxon (Old English) texts call the language *Engle* or *Englisc* (pronounced *English*). The Angli are mentioned by the Roman historian Tacitus (A.D. 55-117), who lived at the time of the apostles. Ptolemy (A.D. 127-141), in his *Geography*, records that the Angli were “one of the chief tribes of the interior” of Europe during the 1st and 2nd centuries. Ptolemy also writes of the Saxon presence in Europe in the first century. “It is doubtful how far the Saxons who invaded Britain were really distinct from the Angli, for all their affinities both in language and custom are with the latter...” (E.B., s.v. Angli, s.v. Saxons). The Angli and Saxons comprised a large percentage of the population of Europe when “**every nation under heaven**”... “heard them speak in his own language” in Acts 2. The Angli and Saxons therefore received the gospel message and scriptures in their own language in the first century, though no copies survive today.

The oldest Anglo-Saxon document we have dates to the time of Æthelberht, King of Kent (A.D. 597), who converted to Christianity; he also had a Christian wife. By the end of the 500s the Britons as a whole were called *Angli* and Æthelberht, King of Kent, was called ‘King of the Angles.’ (David Crystal, *The Cambridge Encyclopedia of the English Language*, Cambridge: Cambridge University, 1995, pp. 1-3).

“**Gildas**, surnamed Sapiens, who wrote an epistle containing a history of Britain about the year **546**, makes lengthy **quotations both from the Old and New**

Testament, as was the custom of all the earliest Christian authors. Gildas quotes from no other book but the **Bible**, but it is plain he does **not quote from the Vulgate**, some **other translation** must have been in use by the church of this land, in his day; a translation, of which not a single copy has survived. In 154 lines of the work of Gildas, there are 100 lines taken entirely, or nearly so, from the **Scriptures**. These are not exceptional pages, for nearly half his writings consist of passages strung together from the **Old and New Testament**” (Dore, 1st ed., p. 3).



600s Old English Bibles & Kings

Many of the native **Celtic Britons** continued to walk with Christ during the 600s. Blair states that, “During its long period of isolation the Celtic Church had developed in complete independence and had diverged considerably from the paths followed by Rome, not merely in matters of form and ritual, but more fundamentally in its whole organization. Rome could not readily brook the continued existence of what it regarded as schismatic ways and still less could it contemplate that **so large a Christian community** which shewed remarkable missionary zeal should not recognize the pope as its spiritual head” (Blair, pp. 129, 134).

BIBLES IN THE 600s

That the vernacular scriptures were received by “**every** nation under heaven” (Acts 2:5) assures us that the Angles and Saxons, who lived in Europe during the time of the apostles, were given the word of God in the first and second centuries. Though hedged about by hordes of heathen countrymen, a remnant cherished it and carried it

from generation to generation — from their cradle in Europe to their caravan to England in A.D. 449.

Bede writes about a Christian named Caedmon, born in the 500s, who brought the *Englisc* scriptures forward for 6th century Christians.

“Whatever of the **holy scriptures** he learned through interpreters he would render in a short time in his own, that is **the English, tongue**...of the creation of the world, the origin of the human race, and the whole story of Genesis; of the departure of Israel from Egypt and the entry into the promised land, and of many other stories from the holy scriptures; of the incarnation, passion and resurrection of the Lord, and his ascension into heaven; and of the coming of the Holy Spirit, and the teaching of the apostles...about the terrors of the coming Judgement, the horrors of punishment in hell, and the joys of the kingdom of heaven; and many others too, about God’s mercies and judgements, in all of which he took care to draw men away from the love of sin...”

(Marsden, pp. 112, 114).

The King James Bible is not the first Bible in English to echo the rhythmic heart-felt peace of the Comforter. Bede states that the scriptures penned by Caedmon were written in a “most **melodious** and moving poetic diction” (Marsden, p. 112).

Much of what we know about Christians in England between A.D. 597 and A.D. 731 is from Bede. He assures us that “the reading of the scriptures is in general use among them all” (Marsden, p. 33). A poem begun in the 600s identifies what kind of Bible was used. It reads in part,

“Grant me, sweet Christ, the grace to find
Son of the living God!—
A little pool but very clear
To stand beside the place,
Where all men’s sins are **washed away**
by sanctifying grace...” (Herm, p. 262).

The phrase “washed away” came from Isa. 4:4 and Ezek. 16:9. The words “Son of the living God” are an echo from Matt. 16:16 and John 6:69. All Anglo-Saxon manuscripts, like all pure Bibles, have the word “Son” (*sunus*) in these verses. *Why* does the TNIV, NIV, NASB, HCSB, and ESV replace the ‘Son’ with the gender neutral ‘One’ in John 6:69?



“Only one **Anglo-Saxon** book thought to be of the **seventh century** now survives in its original binding. This book, now preserved in the Library of Stonyhurst College, Lancashire, [is]...known as the **Stonyhurst Gospels**, though in fact it contains only the **Gospel of John...**” (Blair, p. 315). It has a binding like that of today’s books (Anne Savage, *The Anglo-Saxon Chronicles*, Wayne, N.J.: BHB International Inc., 1997, p. 69).



“Not later than **678** Wilfrid ordered for his newly dedicated church at Ripon **a copy of the four Gospels...**” (Blair, p. 314).



“About the close of the **7th** century the **Psalter** was **translated** by Guthlac a **Saxon...**” (J.R. Dore, Eyre and Spottiswoode, 1888, 2nd edition, p.4; this is not the small first edition being reprinted of late).



Earlier, “Aldhelm...is reported to have rendered the **Psalter** into his native language, and the **Anglo-Saxon version**, discovered in the Royal Library at Paris...has been supposed to be at least in part his production...” (Holy Bible, by Wycliffe, Preface to the 1850 edition by J. Forshall and F. Madden, as cited in *The Gospel According to Saint Mark in Anglo-Saxon and Northumbrian Versions Synoptically Arranged, with Collations Exhibiting All the Readings of All the MSS*, editor, Walter Skeat, Cambridge: University Press, 1871, preface, pp. ii, iii, iv).



IN THE 600s

Seven kingdoms vied for dominance of Britain: Kent, Sussex, Wessex, Essex, East Anglia, Mercia and Northumbria. Periodically one king dominated; the following are a few of the many rulers who became Christians.



ethelbert “first received and preferred the Christian faith in all this land of the English **Saxons**.” In A.D. 604 Ethelbert, king of Kent, counseled **Sebert**, king of **Essex** who “turned to Christ’s faith” (Foxe, vol. 1, pp. 325, 318).



edwin “king of **Northumberland**, a good prince and the first receiver of Christ’s faith in that land...” became a Christian. The Christians “preached” and baptized “continually in the rivers” (Foxe, vol. 1, pp. 325, 345). “Christian kings had ruled in Northumbria” since Edwin in A.D. 627 (Marsden, p. 13).



Rædwald, king of **East Anglia**, was also said to be converted in the early 600s. His son, King “**Erpwald**, through the means of Edwin, king of Northumbria, was brought to the perfect faith of Christ, and therein did faithfully continue.” Later, **Sigebert**, king of the **East-Angles**, was converted (Foxe, vol. 1, pp. 319, n. 4, 348, 349).



Cynegils, the king of the **West Saxons**, was converted in A.D. 635 (Blair, p. 120).



Sebert “the Good,” king of the **East Saxons** became a Christian around A.D. 604 and encouraged Finian “to preach...in his country” (Foxe, vol. 1, pp. 325, 318, n. 8).



Peda “...and **Ulferus**, [kings of **Mercia**, received] Christ’s faith...in those parts, they being converted by Finian” in 655 (Foxe, vol. 1, p. 317, n. 9).



Kingils [king of the **West-Saxons**] “and his brother **Quiciline**...which two kings the same time by the preaching of Birinus, were converted and made Christian men, with the people of the country; being before rude and barbarous” (Foxe, vol. 1, p. 348).



Wolfer, “king of the **Mercians**,” became a Christian and through his influence many of the **South-Saxons** were saved when Wilfred “preached” and “converted them to Christ” (Foxe, vol. 1, p. 354).



Oswald “had been educated in the Christian faith.” Bede calls him “a Most Christian King...a man beloved of God.” Oswald’s influence was over the whole of England in the early 600s. Bede affirms “he brought under his control all the peoples and kingdoms of **Britain**...How great a faith he had in God, and what devotion of heart...” “[P]rotected by their faith in Christ” Oswald and his army defeated the heathen and

“by strength of prayer vanquished them in the field”
(Foxye, vol. 1, p. 316, n. 14). Bede observes that,

“As soon as Oswald came to the throne, he was anxious that all the people under his rule should be filled with the grace of the Christian faith, whose power he had experienced...” (Marsden, pp. 13, 15, 47, 48, 50, 60, 61. 52).

King Oswald in A.D. 634 “sent for Aidan out of Scotland to preach in his country, and as he preached in Scottish, the king **expounded in English**...[He] not only did his endeavor to further the faith of Christ amongst his people; but also being king, disdained not himself to stand up, and interpret [into English] to his nobles and subjects the preaching of Aidan, preaching Christ to them...[O]f this Oswald much praise and commendation is written in authors, for his fervent zeal in Christ’s religion, and merciful pity toward the poor...[H]e, being well and virtuously disposed to the setting forth of Christ’s faith and doctrine, sent into Scotland for...Aidan, who was a famous preacher. The king at what time he was in Scotland banished, had learned the Scottish tongue perfectly: wherefore as this Aidan preached in his Scottish tongue to the **Saxons**, the king himself **interpreting** that which he had said, disdained not to preach and expound the same unto his nobles and subjects **in the English tongue**...In those days, and partly by the means of the said Oswald, **Kingigils**, king of the **West-Saxons**, was converted to Christ’s faith” (Foxye, vol. 1, p. 316 n. 14, pp. 325, 346, 347). Oswald’s converts went on to “convert the whole Germanic community settled south of Hadrian’s Wall” (Herm, p. 268).

Bede confirms that King Oswald, king of all of Britain, interpreted into English the preachings of Aidan who “preached the gospel” and “by whose teachings and

ministry the English people that he ruled might learn the blessings of faith in the Lord.” As a consequence, “Churches were built in various places, and the people gladly flocked together to hear **the word**” (Marsden, pp. 53, 54).



Old English Bibles

Wycliffe, in the 1300s, states in his Bible’s preface that Bede had translated the Bible into Saxon.

“Bede translattide **the bible...in Saxon, that was english**, either comoun langage of this lond, in his tyme” (The Holy Bible, Oxford, ed. John Wycliffe and His Followers, At The University Press, 1395 M.DCCC.L, digitized by Bell & Howell Information and Learning Co., 1997-2000, p. 59).

Bede’s Saxon Bible is attested to by Dore who brings this fact to his readers in the 1800s affirming, “he translated **the Bible** into the vulgar tongue of his day...” (Dore, 1st ed., p. 4). The 1611 KJV translators of the scriptures, note that Bede “turned a great part of them into *Saxon*” (“The Translators To the Reader,” as cited in Dore, 2nd ed., p. 364). Others, like Skeat, with more distance from the facts mention only a part of Bede’s work, noting that Bede made a “translation of the Gospel of St. John...” (*The Gospel According to Saint Mark*, preface, p. ii). Bosworth admits this proves “the three preceding [Matthew, Mark, and Luke] had most likely been previously translated” (*The Gospels: Gothic, Anglo-Saxon, Wycliffe, and Tyndale Versions*, ed. Joseph Bosworth, London: Gibbings and Company, 1907, p. xii).

“[T]he Anglo-Saxon **Gospels** were translated in **735** or **before...**” (Bosworth, p. ii). Bede had access to the Greek text of the book of Acts and perhaps the rest of the Greek New

Testament because there were many "well equipped libraries in England by c. 700 or a little later" (Blair, pp. 314, 315, 324). Bede also was aware of the rhythmic nature of the scriptures. He wrote, "*A book on the Art of **Metre**...modes of speech woven into the language of the **holy scriptures***" (Marsden, p. 200).

The Britons were also "introduced to the Scriptures through oral teaching in the **vernacular**," not Latin (*Camb. Hist.*, vol. 1, p. 371). Foxe writes that when Edbert was king in A.D. 747, a synod declared that Christians should "learn and teach...in the **English** tongue" (Foxe, vol. 1, p. 366). That same year in Clofeshoh, men who "prated in church like secular bards were condemned," as also were those churches "which had become the haunts of versifiers and harpists." "[L]et **the words of God be read**," they proclaimed (Blair, p. 331).



800s "Bibles Consumed With Fire"

At the end of the 700s, Viking attacks on Britain were responsible for the loss of many Bibles (Blair, p. 55). "[I]n 866 York itself passed into the hands of the [Viking] Danes and its library was destroyed" (Blair, pp. 329, 350).

Foxe maintains that the Bibles in "innumerable ancient libraries, which were kept in churches, were consumed with fire by the Danes" (Foxe, 1837 printing, vol. 2, p. 29). The Danish martyred the British king during an invasion in A.D. 870.

"Edmund a Christian king" would "not submit himself to a pagan duke, unless he first would be a Christian...And, for that he [King Edmund] would not renounce or deny Christ and his laws, they therefore most cruelly bound him unto a tree, and caused him to be shot to death" (Foxe, vol. 2, p. 19).



alfred the great (A.D. 849-899) became king of **all Britain** in A.D. 871. He recalls “how the **churches** throughout the country had been filled with...**books** before their destruction by the Danes” (Blair p. 350). From the time of Alfred onward the adjective *Englisc* was in regular use, both in the sense of ‘Englishman’ and as meaning ‘the English language’ (Blair, p. 12).

Asser (A.D. 888) observes that “the king was in the habit of **hearing the divine scriptures read** by his own countrymen...” He states further that, King Alfred, “by divine **inspiration**, began, on one and the same day, to read and interpret...Thus like a most productive bee, he flew here and there, asking questions, as he went, until he had eagerly and unceasingly collected many flowers of divine **scripture**, with which he thickly stored the cells of his mind. Now when that first quotation was copied, he was eager at once to read, and to **interpret in Saxon**, and then to teach others...the King, inspired by God, began to study the rudiments of divine **Scripture**...and he continued to learn...and to reduce them into the form of one book...This book he called his ENCHIRIDION or MANUAL, because he carefully kept it at hand day and night, and found, as **he told me**, no small consolation therein.”

Asser recalls that King Alfred’s children “have carefully learned the **Psalms**” by heart. He said Alfred himself “was frequent in psalm-singing and prayer, at the hours both of the day and night...”
(<http://sunsite.berkeley.edu/OMACL/KingAlfred/part 2.html>).

“**William of Malmesbury**, notes that King Alfred, at the end of the 9th century, had his memory stored not only with the **Psalms** and the **New Testament**, but with the **Old Testament** also...” (Dore, 2nd ed., p. 4).

Bosworth states, “The **Scriptures**, in their own tongue, were revered by the **Anglo-Saxons**, for Alfred the Great placed the **Commandments** at the head of his Laws, and incorporated many passages from the **Gospels**. **Subsequent translators would naturally avail themselves of the versions made by their predecessors**, and write them in the orthography [spelling]...of the time in which they lived” (Bosworth, p. xii).

The editor of an 1850 edition of Wycliffe’s Bible observes, “Alfred...did not overlook the importance of **vernacular Scripture**. At the head of his laws he set in Anglo-Saxon the **ten commandments**, with such of the Mosaic injunctions in the **three following chapters of Exodus**, as were most to his purpose...A remarkable passage in his preface...leaves no room for doubt, that if the more necessary portions of holy writ were not made **accessible to his subjects in their own tongue**, it was only because this wise and pious prince failed of the opportunity to accomplish his wishes. Whatever might be the extent of Alfred’s biblical labours, it is beyond question that soon after his days the Anglo-Saxon church had her own interpretations of those parts of Scripture which were in most frequent use...To the same period may be safely attributed the **Anglo-Saxon translation of the Gospels**” (Holy Bible, by Wycliffe, Preface, pp. ii, iii, iv). “King Alfred had been engaged in translating the **Psalter**...[T]he *Paris Psalter* may preserve this venerable translation” (*Camb. Hist.*, vol. 1, pp. 370-371).

Foxe adds, “Of this Alfred, Bede in his history testifieth that he was exactly and perfectly seen in the holy Scriptures...” (Foxe, vol 1, p. 317, n. 2). “[W]heresoever he was, or whithersoever he went, he bare always about him in his bosom or pocket a little book containing the **Psalms** of David...whereupon he was continually reading or praying...” (Foxe, vol. 2, p. 32). Alfred “thanked God always, what trouble soever fell to him, or to his realm, sustaining it with great patience and humility” (Foxe, vol. 2, p. 25). “...[I]f he were not let by wars or other great business, that eight hours he spent in study and learning, other **eight hours in prayers** and almsdeeds, and other eight hours he spent in his natural rest, sustenance of his body, and the needs of the realm;” (Foxe, vol. 2, p. 27). “But the young king, seeing in himself the inclination of his fleshly nature, and minding not to give himself so much as he might take, but rather by resistance to avoid temptation thereof, besought God that he would send him some continual sickness to quench that vice, whereby he might be more profitable to the public business of the commonwealth, and more apt to serve God in his calling” (Foxe, vol. 2, p. 26).

Regarding Catholic fables about Alfred’s liaison with the pope in Rome, “modern historians do not believe this story” (www.royalty.nu/Europe/England/Alfred.html). In fact, Alfred’s biblical convictions against doctrinal error led him to translate Orosius’s *History Against the Pagans* (Blair, p. 351).



Anglo-Saxon Chronicles Late 800s-1154

Begun in the 800s by command of King Alfred, the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicles* record the secular history of Britain from the year of Christ's birth to the middle of the 12th century. Amidst page after page of monarchs and military campaigns, the Christian pulse of some of England's inhabitants sounds through. (Manuscripts collated, with spelling, vocabulary and orthography updated, by Anne Savage, Wayne, N.J.: BHB International Inc., 1997.)



The Anglo-Saxon Chronicles

preface "this is the day which the lord hath made; we will rejoice and be glad in it" (p. 275).

616 "he commanded him to go to that king and preach the true faith to him; so he did and the king converted and was baptized" (p. 40).

636 "felix preached the christian faith to the east anglians" (p. 41).

640 "ercenberht received the kingdom, he who threw down all the idolatry in his kingdom" (p. 44).

656 "the king [wulfhere] stood up before all his thanes and said in a loud voice, 'thanks be to high almighty god for the worship that is done here; i will this day honour christ...' [he] sent [eoppa] to preach christianity on the isle of wright" (pp. 49, 50).

927 "king aethelstan...renounced all fool-worship" (p. 119).

995 "king...edgar...lifted up the praise of god widely, and honoured god's law...he fervently honoured the name of god and meditated on god's laws often and long, lifted up the love of god far and wide, and counseled wisely often, always before god and the world, all his nation" (p. 128).

1066 [the norman invasion] "the french held the field...as god granted them because of the people's sins" (p. 195).

1067 "just as he in his gospel said that even one sparrow cannot fall into a snare without his foreknowledge...very often the unbelieving husband is hallowed and healed through a righteous wife, as so likewise such a wife through a believing husband" (p. 198).

1087 "...pestilential year...disease fever...severe bad weather...great famine...people died a wretched death through hunger...but such things come to pass for the sins of the people, that they will not love god and righteousness" (p. 218).

1087 "also it happened in spain that the heathen men went and ravaged the christian men, and brought many into their power. but the christian king who was called alfonso, sent everywhere into each land and entreated help; and help came to him from each land that was christian" (p. 221).



Old English Bibles

Bosworth confesses, “We are not certain as to the names of those patriotic Anglo-Saxons, who devoted their time, talents, and learning to the **translating of the Scripture into Anglo-Saxon, that they might be read by the people**, and in their churches; but we have an indisputable evidence in the Rubrics, printed in our notes from the MS. that they were **constantly read in Anglo-Saxon churches**...We have no more knowledge of the exact date when the Gospels were first translated into Anglo-Saxon, than we have of the translators” (Bosworth, p. xii). Blair says these gospels “**were in daily use**” (Blair, p. 316).



“In the later part of the 10th century **Aelfric** collected various early translations of portions of the Bible, and clothed them in the language of his day” (Dore, 2nd ed., p. 5). The West-Saxon **Gospels** contain a note associating them with Aelfric (Metzger, p. 448). He “**translated...the Pentateuch [Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers and Deuteronomy], Joshua, Judges, a portion of Kings, Esther, Job...**” (*The Gospel According to Saint Mark*, p. iii). The *Worcester Fragment*, “copied c. 1200 from a much earlier text” states that “Through these [five Old Testament books] our people were taught **in English**.” This old manuscript goes on to list numerous men who “preached Christianity” and “taught our people in English” (Crystal, p. 34). In the second half of the 900s “They were taught to read, using the **Psalter** as their reading book...” as well (Blair, p. 356). Memorization is enhanced because, Aelfric “pays careful attention to **rhythm**...” (*Camb. Hist.*, vol. 2, pp. 375, 377). Scripture study and memorization were widespread among Christians in Britain. The often repeated fable that during

the Middle Ages ‘few Christians had scriptures and could read,’ is spun by those who know that Christians who have a perpetual and infallible Bible have no desire for the so-called perpetual and infallible papacy. Aelfric himself “rejected the Petrine theory [He believed Peter was not a pope.] and knew nothing of [the false theory of] transubstantiation” (George T. Thompson and Laurel E. Hicks, *World History and Cultures*, Pensacola, FL: Pensacola Christian College, 1992, p. 177). Translators of the Anglo-Saxon Bible did not approve of corrupt “...apocryphal writings. Bede, Aldhelm, Aelfric all protest against the widespread popular use of some of these works” (*Camb. Hist.*, vol. 2, p. 364).



The Rushworth Version of the Gospels in **Anglo-Saxon**, completed by Faerman and Owun about A.D. 950, contains **Matthew, Mark, Luke and John** in Old Northumbrian and Mercian dialects.

These editions document that the majority of Anglo-Saxon manuscripts, like the Gothic Bible before it, were not translated from corrupt Latin or Greek texts, but from pure texts. Bosworth states they are, not from “the Vulgate, but the **old** Latin Version, the *Vetus Italica*, in constant use till the time of Jerome...As the Anglo-Saxon Version was made from the *Vetus Italica*, it may be useful in ascertaining the readings of this **oldest** Latin Version. We may cite one or two examples more in proof that the Anglo-Saxon was from the *Vetus Italica*, and not from the Vulgate of Jerome” (Bosworth, p. xi). The editor of the Anglo-Saxon Gospels notes that the majority of surviving manuscripts of the Anglo-Saxon Bible “scarcely differ in a single letter” and “that there is at present not the faintest trace of any other version” in *wide* use (*The Gospel According to Saint Luke in Anglo-Saxon and Northumbrian Versions Synoptically Arranged, with Collations Exhibiting All the Readings of All the MSS*, editor, Walter Skeat, Cambridge: University Press, 1874, p. xi).



The Lindisfarne **Gospels** were originally done in Latin in A.D. 698 and glossed in Northumbrian (an **Old English** dialect) by **Aldred** in 950. Only this lonely Lindisfarne Old Northumbrian-Latin inter-linear MS. shows any real signs of the corrupting hand of the Latin Vulgate. But it is still *less* corrupt in many places than today's NIV, TNIV, HCSB, NASB and other new versions.

The Lord's Prayer in Matthew in the Lindisfarne MS. reflects in red the sounds of the correct rendering, as seen in the KJV in Luke 11 *and* Matthew 6. This abstract from Matthew is easily read by updating the word order and archaic fonts for the letters 't' and 'th.' Only three words stand out as not immediately recognizable (**ric - reign, sie - is, suae - as it is**).

urer fader
our father

thu art in heofnum
that art in heaven

gehalgad thin noma
be hallowed thy name

thin ric to-cymeth
thy kingdom to cometh

thin will o sie
thy will be done

in eortho suae in heofne...
in earth as it is in heaven
(See *EB*, Bible, English, p. 894.)

Sounding much like our own English Bible, it goes on to say, “**forgefon**” (pronounced, *forgiven*) ‘us our debts’ and ‘deliver us from’ “**yfle**” (pronounced, *evil*).



1000, 1100, & 1200



“Seven manuscripts have come down to us” of the **West-Saxon Gospels** which were created in the south of England around **1000** (*EB*, s.v., Bible, English, p. 895).



The Junius manuscript, dated around **1000**, contains an Old **Saxon** rendition of the book of **Genesis** and much of the book of **Daniel** (Junius XI, Bodleian Library; Blair, pp. 335, 336).



“In the **12th** century the same **gospels** were again copied by pious hands into the **Kentish dialect** of the period” (*EB*, s.v. Bible, English, p. 895).

The LORD'S PRAYER in Luke 11:2-4 in **Anglo-Saxon** echoes 1000 years later in today's King James Bible. It sounds even more like today's English than the matching **red letters** indicate because the letter 'f' was used for the 'v' sound, 'y' for 'i,' and 'ae' for 'ea.' (The text and spelling shown is that of the Hatton or Rushworth MSS.; fonts are updated; the translation was made using *Bright's Anglo-Saxon Reader*, 1912, pp. 241-385.)

Ure faeder thu the on heofene eart;
our father thou that in heaven art

si thin name gehalgod.
is (be) thy name hallowed

to-cume thin rice;
come thy kingdom

gewurthe thin willa
be done thy will

on heofene on eorthe

in heaven in earth

syle us to daeg, urne daig-hwamlican hlaf.
give us to day our daily loaf

for-gyf us ure geltes swa we forgyfath
forgive us our, guilts as we forgive

aelcen thare the with us agylteth .
any those that with us are guilty

And ne laed thu us on costnunge
And not lead thou us into temptation

ac alys us fram yfele
but loose us from evil

(The Gospel According to Saint Luke, ed. Walter Skeat, Hatton and Rushworth MSS., whose spelling and orthography differ slightly from the Anglo-Saxon Lord's Prayer shown later, Cambridge: University Press, 1874, Luke 11:2-4.)

These old **Anglo-Saxon** manuscripts (Hatton MS. 38 and Rushworth MS. CXL) were translated from pure Old Latin Bibles and therefore, like the KJV, include many important words in Luke 11:2-4 which are MISSING in today's NIV, TNIV, NASB, HCSB, ESV and most new versions. The corrupt new bibles follow the Catholic Latin Vulgate, as does the Lindisfarne MS. here also.

An apostate archdeacon in Oxford in 1197 “tells in revealing fashion and to his own satisfaction how he...[harassed] a handful of **Bible-reading** Albigensians, who had the simplicity to believe what they read of **Scriptures** and lived by the light of their understanding” (*Camb. Hist.*, vol. 2, p. 380). In spite of such resistance, “Toward the end of the twelfth century **vernacular** preaching” continued (*Camb. Hist.*, vol. 2, p. 381).



Old English Bibles

Where Are They?

WHAT became of those scriptures used in Britain from the *first* to the *seventeenth* century?









1. Diocletian was just *one* of the many Roman emperors who destroyed scriptures made from the time of the apostles to A.D. 303. The ten official persecutions from A.D. 67-313 were under Nero, Domitian, Trajan, Marcus Aurelius, Severus, Macrianus, Decius, Aurelian, and Diocletian. The charge against Christians and their scriptures was *odio humani generis*, Latin for ‘hate crimes’ (lit. hatred of the human race).
2. Angles, Saxons, and Jutes, many of whom were heathen, destroyed those scriptures written between A.D. 303 and 450.
3. Danes destroyed the scriptures used between A.D. 450 and the late 800s.
4. Normans destroyed the Bibles made between the late 800s and A.D. 1066.
5. Kings Henry IV (1399-1413), Henry V (1413-1422), Henry VIII (1509-1547) and finally Queen Mary (1553-1558) are just a *few* of the English monarchs who called for the *destruction of all* Christian Bibles.

The editor of an 1850 edition of Wycliffe’s Bible observed that, “The writings which are still extant shew that the Anglo-Saxon church must have had in her own tongue a **considerable amount of scriptural instruction**. But these cannot be the full measure of what our forefathers possessed. Much, it cannot be doubted, **perished** in the troubles and confusion attending the incursions and pillages of the Danes; and much, subsequently, though the disfavour shewn by the Normans to the Anglo-Saxon language and literature” (Holy Bible, by Wycliffe, Preface, p. iv).

Anglo-Saxon Manuscripts

IN MUSEUMS

The following Anglo-Saxon manuscripts are among those still available today in museums.

-  Cambridge, Corpus Christi College, MS. 140 (West Saxon Gospels, 1000s).
-  Cambridge University Library MS. li. 2. 11 (West Saxon Gospels, 1000s).
-  Bodleian MS. 441 (Anglo-Saxon Gospels, 1000s; Foxe printed this manuscript).
-  British Museum Cotton MS. Otho C. i (Anglo-Saxon Gospels, 1000s).
-  British Museum MS. Royal I. A. xiv (Gospels, 1100s).
-  Bodleian MS. Hatton 38 (Gospels, 1100s).
-  Bodleian MS. Eng. Bib.C. 2 (Gospels, 1100s).
-  Miscellaneous partial leaves.



Anglo-Saxon Gospels

PRINTED EDITIONS

Foxe published the Saxon Gospels in 1574 as “confirmation” that they were *the same* as the Bible **“now in the church agreeable to the same.”** They prove, “how the religion presently taught and professed in the church at thys present, is no new reformation of thinges lately begonne, which were not before, but rather a reduction of the church to the pristine state of olde conformitie, which once it had” (as cited in Bosworth, pp. xvi, xvii).

Bosworth and Skeat published and edited various extant manuscripts of the Anglo-Saxon Bible, including the following which may be available through Interlibrary Loan (or as reprints from Good Books, 2456 Devonshire Road, Springfield, IL 62703).

1. *The Gospel According to Saint Matthew in Anglo-Saxon and Northumbrian*, ed. by Walter W. Skeat, Cambridge: At The University Press, 1858.
2. *The Gospel According to Saint Mark in Anglo-Saxon and Northumbrian*, ed. by Walter W. Skeat, Cambridge: At The University Press, 1871.
3. *The Gospel According to Saint Luke in Anglo-Saxon and Northumbrian*, ed. by Walter W. Skeat, Cambridge: At The University Press, 1874.
4. *The Gospel According to Saint John in Anglo-Saxon and Northumbrian*, ed. by Walter W. Skeat, Cambridge: At The University Press, 1878.
5. *The Gospels: Gothic, Anglo-Saxon, Wycliffe, and Tyndale Versions*, ed. Joseph Bosworth, London: Gibbings and Company, 1907.



Middle English: BECOMING **AN INTERNATIONAL LANGUAGE**

From the 12th through the 14th century, Old English *became* Middle English, or as the preface to the Great Bible calls it, “the newer language.” Grammatical relationships began to be expressed by word order, not by word ending. (This downgrade may have been caused by the pidgin language created as Britons, Danes and Normans tried to talk to one another.) Actually, much of the shift from Old English to Middle English simply involved spelling. In Old English ‘cwen’ was *pronounced* ‘queen,’ but in Middle English it was finally *spelled* ‘queen.’ Likewise, the Old English *scip* was pronounced *ship* and finally spelled ‘*ship*’ in Middle English. Old English Bibles look like a foreign language to us because of

their odd spelling and unusual fonts. However, a *speaker* of Old English (Anglo-Saxon) could be understood, in great part, by us today. Middle English was used until the end of the 15th century (Crystal, pp. 1-48 et al.).

The narrow Germanic base of Old English vocabulary broadened in Middle English to include Scandinavian, French and Latin words. This broadened the boundaries of English, later opening the doors for international acceptance of the King James Bible. Nearly 1000 **Scandinavian** words entered English through the frequent invasions by the Danes between A.D. 789 and 987. Canute, “the Scandinavian king who also ruled much of England, [in the early 1000s] was a fervent Christian” (*The Horizon History of Christianity*, p. 164). Scandinavian words seen today in the King James Bible include: *they, their, them, are, both, get, give, sister, silver, take, sky, egg* and *fellow*. English was *becoming* an international language.

In 1066 the French Normans invaded Britain and over the next two centuries brought nearly 10,000 **French** words (75% nouns) into the English language. Since the French population in Britain never exceeded 2%, English remained the language of the majority; French was spoken only by the ruling class. “In the 13th century some portions of the **Bible** were translated into **Anglo-Norman**, indicating that a desire for Bible reading existed amongst the upper class of that day” (Dore, 2nd ed., p. 5). Examples of French words introduced in that period and appearing today in the KJV include: *crown, majesty, minister, prince, heir, trespass, prison, baptism, charity, creator, faith, prayer, repent, temptation, saviour, virtue, and adultery*.

During the 14th and 15th centuries many words were introduced into English from **Latin**. How can Rome being evil speak good things? Out of the abundance of their evil heart their mouth pours out poison like: *antichrist, pope,*

priest, scribe, scorpion, conspiracy, relic, idol, demon, lunatic, Lucifer, fever, ulcer, cancer, nervous, and martyr.

(This Latin speaking city whose seven hills imprisoned Paul, pens wicked words with the blood of the saints according to Rev. 17, 18).

English — a rich language born with a silver spoon in its mouth — can feed many needs. The deposit of many words into the English word bank has led to its highly distinctive feature of having three different words to express the same thing. One can *rise* in Anglo-Saxon (Matt. 20:19), *mout* in French (Isa. 40:31) or *ascend* in Latin (John 20:17) (Crystal, pp. 1-48). This rich vocabulary accomplishes several things:

- It gives English and its King James Bible a vast storehouse from which to draw in order to create alliteration, rhythm and rhyme.
- It gives the King James Bible an international vocabulary, a great deal of which is recognizable today by those from many nations which share the Latin alphabet seen on the cross (John 19:20).

Summary

The cornerstones of English— Gothic and Anglo-Saxon— have been polished after the similitude of a palace and garnished with precious stones for beauty. Gothic and Anglo-Saxon were spoken concurrently during the first millennium, but by different groups of people. They often match because they were carved out of the same north-central European foundation, set in place at the confounding of languages in Gen. 11:7. Dr. James Hanson, Professor Emeritus at Cleveland State University observes that first century Gothic, as documented in the previous chapter, was sometimes even more like today's English, than the Anglo-Saxon shown in the upcoming section. Many Anglo-Saxon words *sound* just like today's English; some words, like 'God,' 'he,' 'his,' 'and,' 'me,' even have the same spelling.

